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New bridge

Replacement for O'Reilly's bridge on schedule; page 3

Job cuts

DSBN faces funding shortfalls page 19

Feline justice

Man charged after cat shot with arrow page 14

Transit

Plan given a green light page 20

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INPORT NEWS

SERVING PORT COLBORNE • WAINFLEET • SHERKSTON • LOWBANKS • ISSUE NO. 26 VOLUME 14

For news updated daily see www.inportnews.ca

■ FLAVOURS FESTIVAL

Goat, ox tail on the menu

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Port Colborne is gearing up for a flavourful weekend.

see **FLAVOURS** | A2

See Inside:
INSERTS
Full Distribution



HOMES
EXTRA

THE **BARGAIN!** SHOP

■ CO-OP: Student finds herself thanks to program



Lexi Esposito stirs a pot of soup at Canalside Pub and Eatery. Esposito said taking a high school co-op placement was the best decision she ever made.

DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Cooking up a career

DAVE JOHNSON
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Like most high school students, Lexi Esposito didn't know what she was going to do when she finished school.

"I was going to take a year off," said the 18-year-old.

But thanks to Port Colborne High School's co-op program and Canalside Pub and Eatery, Esposito will be headed off to culinary school next year.

It's a big change for someone who didn't like homework — or being in school in the first place.

"I had taken a variety of courses in high school, from your typical compulsory credits like math and English, to some electives that just weren't for me," Esposito said.

"I took co-op because it would give me two credits and I wouldn't be in school."

see **COOKING** | A2

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■ FLAVOURS



Port Colborne city staff have been busy preparing for the fourth annual Flavours of Niagara International Food and Wine Festival which runs July 2, 3 and 4. In front are volunteer co-ordinator Joanne Feracelli, mayor's youth advisory council chair Shawn Edén and vendor co-ordinator Bryan Tech. In the back row are festival president Bob Hill, Mayor Vance Badawsky, special events co-ordinators Allaina Kane and Gina Murdoch and community services manager Gary Makins. The event features entertainment, food from 14 vendors and five wineries at H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park.

KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Changes in store for this year's festival

FROM PAGE A1

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park will be filled with thousands of people from across the region sampling cuisines from smoky sausage, to grilled chicken to Belgian waffles.

Flavours of Niagara International Food and Wine Festival is quickly becoming a signature event. This year it will feature 14 food vendors and five wineries.

Organizers are expecting 25,000 people to flow through the park as long as Mother Nature co-operates.

"It's always nice to come to Flavours and try new things," said Mayor Vance Badawsky, who enjoyed sampling alligator last year.

This year's festival will be slightly different than previous years. Instead of purchasing wine coupons, booths will accept cash.

Adults wanting to purchase alcoholic drinks will have their identification checked.

At the entrance, they will receive a wristband that must be worn to be served alcohol. "It's the festival of festivals,"

said Flavours president Bob Hill. "I can't think of a better place to be."

The festival was created four years ago by the South Niagara Community Futures Development Corp.

This year staff have handed over reins to the Flavours of Niagara board, which is running the event with support from city staff. It features samples of food for \$5 and under and those in attendance can bring their own lawn chair to enjoy the entertainment.

Visit www.portcolborne.ca for more information.

kforand@wellandtribune.ca

THE MENU

Joe's Meat Market – hot and mild smoked sausage, onion rings, back bacon on a bun
Caribbean Flavour – chicken curry roti, jerk chicken, oxtail with rice and peas, curry goat
Kindred Marketplace – pear and walnut pie on flaky croissant, Belgium waffle with whipped cream and fruit, island original fruit smoothies

The Rex Hotel – sausage supreme with roasted red

peppers, homemade gnocchi, Italian fried ice cream, slushes

Rose City Pizza – Mediterranean and all-dressed gourmet pizza, Buffalo fingers, bruschetta, mozzarella sticks
In Season Catering – fresh fruit crepe, salmon deli crepe, pulled pork, caprese

The Smokin' Buddha – pad thai, spring rolls, gyro, samosa, dimsum
@Z7 Restaurant – mini ribs with blue cheese colucci, bacon-wrapped jumbo blagier tiger shrimp with spicy Thai glaze, chocolate cheesecake

Country Corner Market – curry tuscani and honey garlic sausage, steak on a bun, hotdogs

Kool Kats Caribbean – jerk chicken in a pita, Jamaican patty, vegetable and goat roti

Super Mario's Pizza – pepperoni pizza
Hank Daddy's BBQ – baby back ribs, grilled pork/chicken medallions, pulled pork/chicken sliders, smoked chicken wings

Spice of Life – Grilled Moroccan chicken breast on couscous salad, Middle Eastern falafel with tzatziki, samosas with Niagara peach and pepper

chutneys

Hot Licks – hot apple dumpling, brownie sundae, ice cream, banana split, hot and sticky toffee pudding cake

Wineries – Coyote's Red Estate Winery, Shell Estate Winery, 20 Bees Winery, Eastliff Estates Winery, Joseph's Estate Wineries

DAILY SCHEDULE

Friday July 2

5 to 9 p.m. – food and wine vendors open
8 to 10:30 p.m. – More Bad News and the Horns From Hell

Saturday July 3

11 a.m. to 9 p.m. – food and wine vendors open
1 to 10 p.m. – beer tent open

1 to 3:30 p.m. – The Johnny Max Band
4:30 to 7 p.m. – Fathead Band
8 to 10:30 p.m. – British Invasion

Sunday July 4

11 a.m. to 9 p.m. – food and wine vendors open
1 to 10 p.m. – beer tent open

1 to 3:30 p.m. – Steve Burnside with the Marquis
4:30 to 7 p.m. – LMT Connection
8 to 10:30 p.m. – Joney

■ COOKING

Co-ops give students options for careers

FROM PAGE A1

After speaking with co-op teacher Shawn Coers and culinary arts teacher chef Joel Gulliford, she decided to try a co-op placement with a restaurant and landed an interview at Canalside, on West St. in Port Colborne.

Starting last January, and working two-and-a-half hours a day at the restaurant, Esposito was doing things like cleaning dishes and various odd jobs.

Though those kinds of jobs weren't what she was hoping for, Esposito enjoyed going to her co-op placement and really liked all the people there.

But by observing what was going on in the kitchen and seeing how things were done, she was given the chance to cook.

"I learned what was on the menu and on the sandwiches, time management and how to read the charts. Everything just fell into place."

Before she came to Canalside, Esposito said the culinary program at Port High had taught her food handling and sanitization techniques and how to cook.

There was one big difference though.

"In school you could take an hour to cook one thing. In two hours here you have to cook 60 things. I never cooked at home before and now I do," she said.

Even though the co-op, and school year, recently ended, it's not the end for Esposito at the restaurant.

Owners Greg and Rosemarie Poisson were impressed with Esposito, who had average marks in school, and gave her a part-time job as the opening cook for Canalside.

"She works by herself now, prepping and cooking. I have total confidence in her," said Greg Poisson.

He said the difference between when Esposito started the co-op placement to now is phenomenal.

"I've noticed a big change in her. Her confidence went way up and did her abilities."

Poisson said he and his wife support the co-op program and have been taking students in for the past six

years they've been open. Four of those students went on in the field and now work for places like the Hilton Hotel and Smokin' Buddha.

"Most kids don't know what they want to do when they're 18, the co-op program is a good way for them to see if they're a job," he said.

Poisson said when he was 18, he had no idea what he wanted to do and thankfully the owner of a doughnut shop where he worked became his mentor. That's what he and wife hope to accomplish with the students they bring in each year, to help them decide where they want to do in life.

"It's our way of staying involved in the community and giving back. I'm excited to see where these kids will be 15 years from now," said Poisson.

He said the business will continue to take in co-op students.

Esposito said the program pushed and motivated her.

"Even if I don't end up working in a restaurant, it helped me. It made me want to come to class. I am so happy that I signed up for co-op. It really did turn out to be the best decision I made at high school," she said.

"I hope all students should try to get into a co-op if they can."

"It helps you think positive and you get to try out a job. I suppose that more businesses in town will open their doors to co-op students to give them this opportunity."

Esposito's co-op teacher Shawn Coers said, "I'm very happy for Lexi that she has found her passion in life. I'm sure every adult can think back to that same feeling as they neared the end of their high school tenure and were not 100% sure what the wanted to do in life. I know I can and it created a lot of anxiety."

He said Esposito's story really solidifies the legitimacy of taking co-operative education.

"Co-op is a great way to make contacts, gain experience, test drive a career and figure out your future," he said.

djohnson@wellandtribune.ca

portraits

■ **INFRASTRUCTURE:** Project to be completed by November

New O'Reilly's Bridge on time and on budget



LAURA GARZON Staff Photo

Seven Brennan Paving Ltd. contractors work on the new O'Reilly's Bridge, slated to be finished by November. The men who have been working nine hours a day on the project believe the bridge will be ready by early October.

ALLAN BENNER
InPort News Staff

PELHAM — Construction workers from Brennan Paving Ltd. in Port Colborne have been at work for nearly three months building a new span across the Welland River.

And they expect to be there for another four months before they've completed building the new O'Reilly's bridge, said Niagara Region project engineer Mike DiPaola.

Even then, he suspects there may be some additional work such as landscaping to be completed in the spring of 2011 before the \$2.8-million project is completed.

DiPaola said the project, which began with the removal of the century-old single-lane bridge in late March, is on time and on budget.

Work is underway on building a support pier for the new bridge.

DiPaola said a unique design feature of the new bridge was created by leaving the abutments of the original structure in place, and building the new abutments behind them.

By doing so, he said "we didn't have to damn up the

water and dewater an area" to build a new one. DiPaola said the abutments will also be refaced with a stone texture.

That type of decorative treatment is most often used on more well-travelled bridges than O'Reilly's — which is normally crossed by about 500 to 750 vehicles a day between Pelham and Wainfleet. But since that type of esthetic finish doesn't add much to the overall cost of the project, DiPaola said it's becoming much more common.

"It's becoming a very popular type of work, and the pricing of it is pretty competitive."

In the case of O'Reilly's Bridge, "we thought it's a nice touch," he said. "When you take down a historic bridge people like to see something esthetically pleasing."

Although the contractor removed and disposed of the old bridge, DiPaola said enough of the original steel girders were preserved to construct a monument to commemorate the old bridge.

It will be located on the Pelham side of the river, just west of the bridge.

abenner@wellandtribune.ca



ANDY BROOKS Supplied photo

O'Reilly's Bridge pictured before its removal for a new structure now under construction.

IMPORT NEWS

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ourview

Real world experience

Led Esposito is a perfect example of why high school co-op programs are important.

The graduating Port Colborne High School student found a possible future career thanks to the program.

Esposito had average marks in high school, but didn't really like going to school and doing homework.

And like most teens, the 18-year-old had no idea what she wanted to do in life.

So she decided to take part in the co-op program, after speaking with teacher Shawn Coers and culinary teacher Joel Culliford. Canalside Pub and Eatery owners Greg and Rosemarie Poisson took Esposito in to their West St. business. Esposito was actually the sixth student the business has taken in during the years it has been open.

It was at Canalside where she discovered her possible career path.

While cleaning dishes and doing odd jobs, the student observed what was going on in the kitchen.

She slowly learned the menu and was trained how to prep and then cook. During that time, she started to look forward to going to co-op and school.

Greg Poisson said Esposito's abilities and confidence started to grow over the six months she was there.

He said the change in her was noticeable.

Poisson has even hired Esposito on for the summer as the opening cook for the restaurant.

And next year she'll head off to Niagara College's culinary program.

Esposito said the program pushed and motivated her. "Even if I don't end up working in a restaurant, it helped me. It made me want to come to class. I am so happy that I signed up for co-op. It really did turn out to be the best decision I made at high school," she said.

Shawn Coers said Esposito's story solidifies the legitimacy of taking co-operative education.

"Co-op is a great way to make contacts, gain experience, test drive a career and figure out your future," he said.

FAITH COLUMN

I've been thinking about truth

FR. DAVID GRAHAM SCOTT
St. Ignatius of Antioch Orthodox Church

There is a Buddhist parable about a king who summoned all the blind people in his city to one place.

To that place he brought an elephant. He allowed some of the blind to touch the elephant's head and told them that this is what an elephant is like.

Others he allowed to touch the ear, the tusk, the trunk, the hindquarters, the hair on the tip of the tail.

The king then asked them, one by one, to say what an elephant was like. According to the part of the elephant that each one touched, one would say, "It's like a woven basket"; another would say, "It's like a pot"; still others would say it's like a plow handle or a storehouse or a pillar or a broom.

And then they began to quarrel and fight with each other over what an elephant was truly like. The king found this most entertaining.

The conflict between religious seems to people today like this quarrel among the blind.

Some would say that each of the blind had a small but imperfect idea

of what an elephant was like. But since they were blind, and since they had only touched part of the animal, no one could claim to have the truth.

Now Sunday after Sunday I pray to God, affirming that he is "Ineffable, Inconceivable, Invisible, Incomprehensible." Clearly I am admitting that I am blind, that I cannot see God, that I cannot define God.

In fact St. Augustine once said that if you think you understand God, it is not God whom you understand.

On one hand, then, we human beings cannot discover the truth about God, however dimly we may perceive him. What we need in order to know the truth is for God to reveal himself, to tell us what, if anything, he is really like.

We can be confident that the Creator who made us with mouths to speak and ears to hear can speak to us and bear our prayer.

And the witness of Judaism and the Christian Church is that God has revealed himself, has spoken to human beings, has told us what he is like and how we should behave.

Hearing God over nearly two thousand years, Judaism tells us that God is righteous and holy, merciful and

compassionate.

Hearing God With-Us, the Church tells us that God is also Spirit, light and love; that God's light became a human being like us, but without blindness; and that this man, Jesus of Nazareth, died for our sins, and conquered death, rising from death on the third day.

It is the process of hearing God that requires character and help. Our character must be moral and loving, and our help must be God's own Spirit, enlightening our minds with faith and love.

St. Nikolai Velimirovich said that when skeptics ask about deep mysteries, "Show them the way first to fulfill the basic Ten Commandments of God. As this is learned, then will their souls be opened up to the comprehension of divine mysteries..." Jesus himself promised his disciples that "when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will testify of me" (John 15:26).

And Jesus promised believers, "If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed."

readers' views

Port Colborne can benefit from wind farms

I would like to respond to the reader who doubted the value of wind farms and solar energy projects.

While he could be right with his math, the province is trying to kick-start change and pace of installing these energy projects with special rates for renewable and non-polluting sources, they need financing somehow.

Port Colborne being close to the lake with lots of air currents could benefit by wind turbines and all its future energy needs could be met, without the use of oil and coal, when the initial costs are paid for, remember oil and coal are highly subsidized with tax breaks and direct subsidies.

The Europeans are so far ahead of us in harvesting the natural energy sources, these energy farms can be located on former brownfields, lands heavily polluted by toxins and heavy metals and now lying dormant and derelict.

The European people have while

communities that are now totally free from the old energy sources. An island off the coast of Denmark is completely fossil free, they get all of their energy from flex-fuels.

They run their tractors and autos on electricity plugged into their own grid, most homes and buildings have solar panels on their roofs and their excess electricity is exported back to the mainland, a bonus income for the community.

The people in the environmental movement would never dream of utilizing precious farmland for these uses, especially when there is plenty of scrub land available.

Energy hungry Las Vegas is now using desert land for solar farms, the crop is not polluting electric energy.

George Jardine
Fort Erie

Port Hospital Foundation holds annual golf tourney

As chairperson for the 16th annual Foundation of Golf Classic I have to especially thank Maria Aliberti for taking the

time and effort to come in to the hospital for The Tribune interview.

In Maria's recuperating state she was able to help bring awareness and relate to us her first hand experience the advantages of having an electric bed while being a patient at Port Colborne hospital.

Wednesday, May 26, was a beautiful day for the annual golf classic at the Port Colborne Golf & Country Club.

We were able to raise an astounding \$17,000 to help purchase two new electric beds for our Port Colborne hospital. We had 132 golfers participate in the tournament and 144 in total attended the delicious dinner prepared by Brent, Mario and staff of the club.

Much thanks goes to the businesses who provided the lunch — Plinty's Delicious Foods, Bodner's Meats, Prime Cuts, Brent and Jenny's No Frills, Food Basics, Sobey's and Nancy Horneknut for donating and preparing the veggie and fruit trays and to Jack O'Neil and Dan Fox for doing such a fine job of the barbecuing and the club kitchen staff for their help.

see LETTERS | A5

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE A4

To our dinner sponsor, Thurston Machine Co. Ltd. and Budawey's for the shirt apportion and to PCGCC.

Much thanks to our cart rental sponsors Okam Steel and Minor's Fisheries. Special thanks to our out of town sponsors William Cooper of ESPERA/Cooper Canada NA Inc. and to David Marmo of Saturn Scale Systems Inc. who provided the Reef Estate Winery gifts to the participants.

To Carol Legage of Reef Winery for coming to the club to give us the wine tasting experience before the dinner and for their donation, a very big thank you.

We had an amazing 43 sign sponsors and to the very numerous businesses and individuals who donated the many item for the raffle table and the five live auction packages, much gratitude to all of you.

To Alex Wilson and Mario Caputo of the PCGCC, much thanks to you both for your professional guidance in all the planning for the tournament. To my golf committee

and the volunteers for the day thanks for your time and assistance in the many chores involved.

The team included Carmela and Joe Rulli, Cindy Pinelli, Claudia Brema, Cindy Thorpe, Darcy McAvoy Lee Vanderlaan, Betsy Fox, Nancy Horjenski and Maria Alborti.

To Wayne Kozar for being the evening's auctioneer and to Meagan Miller for attending the Benefit Partners event.

I wish to give our foundation administrator, Debbie Spraggett a very special thank-you for all the hard work she did in keeping us organized and informed.

In closing, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the community and everyone who helped out one way or another. Congratulations for the team work in exceeding our goal of \$13,000 to the amazing \$17,000 to be used for Port Colborne hospital.

Marie Vanderlaan
PCHA 16th Golf Classic
Chairperson
Port Colborne

Smoke and mirrors

I don't know if I should be flattered that Tom Rankin himself came to Wainfleet township, to refute my earlier delegation asking council to demand a moratorium against further wind turbines, or whether to feel annoyed at being accused of lying at a public meeting.

I guess Rankin feels quite safe, attacking a retiree on a port demolishing pension, so not in any position to do anything about it.

Except of course, to question the 'facts' that Rankin, a self-confessed 'expert' on the wind industry for, I think he said 12 years now, and a contractor who has already prospered from

wind turbines and with the present Green Energy Act is planning on prospering even more.

He stated that three independent enquiries financed by the wind industry had produced no evidence that wind turbines caused any adverse health effects in humans or animals.

In 2009 the American

and Canadian Wind Energy Association funded an Expert Panel to do just such a study. Their report, 'An Expert Panel Review, 2009' acknowledged that people are experiencing adverse physiological and psychological symptoms from exposure to industrial turbines. see LETTERS 1A6

INPORT/NEWS

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INPORT

LETTERS

FROM PAGE A5

The expert panel also acknowledged that wind turbine noise, including low frequency noise may cause annoyance, stress and sleep disturbance.

One of the experts on the panel, Geoff Leventhal, has stated "The claim that their 'lives have been

ruined" by the noise is not an exaggeration." After receiving this Report the ACWEA said they '... would not be advocating funding further studies.'

Mr. Rankin also stated that by 2020 wind turbines would be producing 30% of our energy needs. Even if his forecasts are correct (which are far above any

output produced anywhere in the world to date and Europe have been suffering wind turbines for over 20 years now), he carefully avoided telling us how the other 70% will be produced.

He mocked nuclear power and its huge expense but omitted to mention that other coun-

tries, Sweden amongst them, have adopted energy policies that include replacing nuclear power plants as they are the only power source that will be able to fulfil all their energy needs.

And finally and the most amusing part of the whole evening for me. Paying three times as much more

for wind power now, compared with current costs, because the rate is 'fixed' for 20 years is a good deal.

By the end of the 20 still it will be relatively cheap to have anyone still out there who really believes that any government of any political colour will maintain a fixed price for any energy costs for even 1 year never mind 20 years.

Alternative energy would be a great step forward. Sadly it does not yet work.

Andrew Watts
Wainfleet

Walleye tourney was a success

On behalf of the Port Colborne and District Conservation Club 2010 executive and all of our members, I would like to thank the volunteers and sponsors of the 444 Walleye tournament.

Kudos to Bob Mitchell, Dave Mallory, Darren Ford, Brian Rankin, Frank Ruzicky, Al Peterson, Mark Adams, Dave Earley, Dave Zarella, Tanja Schultz, Bob Mahoney, Walter Oster, Ivo Colu, Greg Shewchuk, Denis Kreze and Greg Bull for their generous gifts.

Thanks also goes out to the following businesses for their sponsorship support: Remax, Allied Marine and Industrial, Port Colborne Quarries, Rankin Construction, Harvey's Swiss Chateau, Canadian Tire (Toronto), Bass Pro Shops, Toronto

Sportsman Shows, Erie Tracker Outfitters, Greenside Landscaping, Sunshine Trucking, Purple Downriggers, Pure Fishing, Fishing Niagara, Shimano Canada, Lures, Koppers Live Target, Planks Choice, Molson Canada, Stolk Construction, Port Colborne Storage, Simmons Auto, Snider Dock Services, Thurston Machine, Meridian Credit Union, Archer Truck Services, Young Automotive, F.A.Y. Farms, Stolk Construction, Barber Hymac, Super Service Rubber Stamp, Boggio's Pharmacy, Marlon Marina, CRL Cambell and Bodners Market.

A special thanks to Denise Carpenter, Mark Minor and the fine staff at Sugarloaf Marina, Mayor Vance Badawry and the City of Port Colborne, JoAnn Schaubel and Kaesha Forand from the Tribune, Melo Layne and to all the participants.

Please remember to support these local business owners and show them what being a community is all about, without their support these events would not exist.

The Port Colborne & District Conservation Club uses all monies raised from the 444 to continue its legacy of award winning conservation programs. For information please visit the website pccc.com.

Chris MacEachern
Acting President, PCCDC
Port Colborne

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■ COLUMN



Thousands flocked to H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park for the Flavours of Niagara International Food, Wine and Jazz Festival.

Flavours galore down by the lake

I can forego the summertime Niagara Falls and St. Catharines Ribfest.

I can easily live without the fall Niagara Food Festival in Welland.

But when the Flavours of Niagara International Food and Wine Festival hits H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park each year around this time, I spend as much time as possible checking out the culinary delights. This weekend will be no exception.

Nothing against the two ribfests or the Welland Food festival, but there is just something magically relaxing about this time of year. It's the perfect combination, really.

Take a calming body of water, put a gorgeous park with mature trees on its shores, invite some of the area's renowned culinary masters and best wineries to come and set up shop for a



George Duma
BY GEORGE

couple of days, bring in some top musical talent to augment the whole thing, and how can it not be a winning formula?

Atmosphere at these types of events is a key to the enjoyment quotient.

It's why the Ribfest in St. Catharines at Montebello Park is such a finer experience than the one at Optimist Park in Niagara Falls, even though the rib-grilling vendors are virtually the same.

The beautiful, lush Montebello Park, steps from downtown and tucked into a lovely neighbourhood spot just off Ontario St. is such a contrast to the flat, barren Optimist Park in Niagara Falls, located between

Dorchester Rd. and the QEW, smack dab next door to several big-box stores.

It's why the Niagara Food Festival lost much of its charm when it moved off Merritt Island and relocated to Welland's downtown core.

The island is arguably one of the most serene, beautiful spots in all of Niagara. Its character was such a large part of the food festival's appeal.

I completely understand what necessitated the move. When it would rain during the food fest, the island turned into a swamp, making it virtually impossible for vendors to prepare their delights and for visitors to navigate the muddy terrain. Still, when it comes to atmosphere, you can't compare Merritt Island to a concrete parking lot behind Welland's Civic Square.

see DUMA | A8



LARRY BOGGIO
B.Ph., B.Sc. Pharm. (emer)

Ask Our Pharmacists



DONNIE EDWARDS
B.Ph., B.Sc. Pharm.

Insect Repellent

Chances are you've already experienced one or two mosquito bites this year. The following are a few tips on how to avoid getting any more.

The most effective bug repellents are the ones that contain DEET. The concentration can vary from 5% to 100%. For most people 10% to 30% provides enough protection. The concentration refers to how long a product will last. So a 30% product will be effective longer than a 10% product. It is generally recommended you use 10% or less on kids. You should not use repellent on babies. They should be protected with clothing and a bug net over their carriers.

DEET can reduce the effectiveness of your sunscreen but we don't recommend using a combo product. Sunscreen should be reapplied throughout the day whereas you want to apply bug spray only once or twice in a day. Put your sunscreen on first and then the bug spray.

Apply products containing DEET carefully. Use just enough to lightly cover the skin. Apply only to exposed skin, not under clothing. Avoid contact with eyes and mouth. Don't apply to children's hands, and be sure to wipe your hands after application. Apply to your outer clothing and protect your skin with clothing as much as possible. Especially cover feet with socks and shoes.

There are some natural products you can try. Soybean oil repels mosquitoes for three to four hours. Citronella oil may work for an hour or two. Some people think Thiamin and other B vitamins are bug repellents, but there is no real evidence that they work.

If you do experience some mosquito bites apply some over-the-counter hydrocortisone cream. If you put it in the fridge before hand it will have a nice cooling effect. You can also take Benadryl. This helps with the itch but it makes some people drowsy.

Mosquitoes are more prevalent between dusk and dawn so you may want to avoid being outside at those times. Also, remove standing water where mosquitoes like to breed.

If you follow the above tips you should be able to avoid the mosquitoes and have a safe and happy summer.

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Something magical about Port's food fest down by the lake

FROM PAGE A7

I think one of the most appealing things about our Flavours fest is the fact it never seems crowded. There is just so much room at our lakeside park, room to move, room to relax and stretch out, room to visit with family and friends without bumping elbows with everyone else there.

That doesn't necessarily happen at other food fests.

Also, for the most part, portions are small and priced accordingly, which means you don't have to spend a fortune, but you can still sample four, five or six different things, especially if you're sharing. That's what a food festival should be all about. Not simply going for one meal-sized dish.

So what's on the menu for this year's Flavours fest?

Lots. And again, you don't

have to break the bank to try out some of them.

Admission is free, which means the music is free. And the dishes are \$5 and under. Personal favourites for this weekend, as I peruse the menu, will include:

- mini ribs with blue cheese coulis, and bacon-wrapped jumbo black tiger shrimp with spicy Thai glaze prepared by the Sloats on @ 27;

- gozoza and dimsum from Kevin and The Smokin' Buddha group;

- a hot smoked sausage from the sausage king himself, Joe Ujlassy and the folks at Joe's Meat Market;

- homemade gnocchi from The Rex;

- grilled Moroccan chicken breast on couscous salad.

And...well the list goes on, paired up with either a nice, crisp chardonnay or a

mellow merlot, depending on the dist.

It's the nice thing about a food fest like this spread over three days — you can go back and sample tomorrow what you didn't take to today.

Flavours kicks off Friday night and runs until Sunday night. For a list of the musicians and the times they hit the stage, check out either the City of Port Colborne website under events, or the Flavours of Niagara International Food and Wine Festival Facebook page. See you there.

George Duma is a resident of Port Colborne and has spent 30 years in the newspaper business. He is currently a member of the Journalism faculty at Niagara College. He welcomes comments and column suggestions and can be reached at: gduma@cogeco.ca

DOGS

More Spanies from Group 1

The Britanny Spaniel came originally from France in an area known as Brittany.

He has been described as a dog with maximum qualities in a minimum size. We would consider him to be a medium sized dog with long legs. He has the shape of a Setter rather than the shorter legs of a spaniel.

He is agile and quick at everything he does. He has an attractive red and white coat of medium length which is easy to manage. He has a great talent for pointing and retrieving in fields and dense brush. He has a very high energy level and loves to work. His first choice of activities is hunting but he can also do very well at jumping dog sports and obedience. With all this energy, work is needed to make him a good house pet. Another medium sized spaniel is the American Water Spaniel.

He is one of the few dogs developed in the United States.

He has a dense, curly liver coloured coat and he looks



Sandie Bingley
IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

a little like an ungroomed Poodle. With his thick coat he can work in all types of weather and water conditions and will retrieve ducks in very cold water.

Hunting is his main interest and he can remember where up to 5 ducks have fallen and search out and retrieve every one of them.

The Irish Water Spaniel may be one of the breeds in the development of the American Water Spaniel. He is the largest of the Spaniel breeds at 24" and looks like a large Poodle with a hairless tail. In the Middle Ages he was known as the Rat Tail Spaniel. Like his American cousin, he is a great hunting dog on land and water and will work all day.

He has a reliable temperament, quick to learn and affectionate.

With these qualities he makes a good house pet for the family that is willing

to brush him daily. His personality makes him very enjoyable and he is known as the clown of the Spaniel group.

The heaviest of the spaniels is the Clumber Spaniel that can weigh up to 75 pounds although only 20" tall. There is a question as to whether this breed originated in France or Clumber England.

The story goes that a French breeder left his prize dogs in England for safe keeping during the French Revolution. The breed remained in England and was continued there. The other story is that it was always a British breed. As with many breeds, early records weren't kept until much later. The Clumber Spaniel can be sedate and reserved but are loyal and affectionate with their family. Even though they are long and low in body, short on leg and head headed, they are steady reliable hunting dogs that work best in thick brush areas.

They are enthusiastic when at work or play.

Next Time: More Rare Spaniels in Group 1

NOTICE OF MEETING

PUBLIC LIAISON COMMITTEE
for the
COMMUNITY BASED RISK ASSESSMENT
for Soils Contaminated in the Port Colborne Area

Thursday, July 8th, 2010 at 7:00 pm
Council Chambers, City Hall

AGENDA

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes

-PLC Meeting of April 29th, 2010
-PLC Meeting of May 20th, 2010
-PLC Minutes of July 9th, 2010

3. Updates of CBRA Activities

- PLC Report
- Status of LTF Report
- Independent Consultant Report Status

4. Delegations

5. General Question and Answer Session

6. Next Steps

7. Adjournment

Persons wishing to be "delegates" to the committee should register, in advance, with Dan Aquilino, Director of Planning and Development at (905) 835-2900 ext. 203, or, at danaquiline@portcolborne.ca

AGENDA



HERITAGE PORT COLBORNE

The Heritage Port Colborne Committee is pleased to announce a plaquing ceremony to celebrate the designation of the following property under the Ontario Heritage Act:

**2146 Second Concession
Doan Cemetery**

REASONS FOR THE DESIGNATION

This property meets numerous criteria required for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The site is culturally significant because of its historical and associative value and contextual value.

The subject property is associated with the Doan, Steele, Krisley and Michener families, some of the first settlers in Humberstone Township. The property was part of the original crown patent awarded to United Empire Loyalist Aaron Doan on May 17, 1802 and contains the family burying grounds of Aaron Doan, Christian Krisley and William Michener

The property is also a cultural landscape feature as it is situated on the original 3/8ths of an acre and contains many of the original grave markers dating back to 1844 and earlier.

CEREMONY DETAILS

The ceremony will take place on **Saturday, July 10, 2010 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.** at 2146 Second Concession, Cakes and punch reception to follow at the Vanderhaegh Farm House located behind the cemetery. The Heritage Port Colborne Committee welcomes all interested parties to attend the ceremony.

AGENDA

ITALIAN ANNIVERSARY



MARIYANNE FIRTH Staff Photo

The 75th anniversary of the Italian Canadian Cultural Centre in Port Colborne was celebrated Saturday night with a dinner and dance for its close to 300 members. Pictured are Bettina DiGullo, president of the centre's ladies auxiliary, and centre president Tony DiGullo, cutting the celebratory cake for the occasion.

TREE PLANTING

DAVE JOHNSON
Staff Photo

Joshua Kane, Spencer Taylor, Lianne Bankert and Arizona Pardi get ready ready to plant a tree at McKay School. Sixteen trees will be planted on the west side of the school playground to provide a windbreak and shade for students at the Port Colborne school.



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but what I will not let it do is change who I am inside.
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*I know that I need further treatment.
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allowing me more time with my family.*

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■ **SANFILIPPO SYNDROME:** Couple's journey a tribute to Port Colborne children

Cycling 6,400 km in search of a cure

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — It's a cycling trip like no other.

Jim Roth and Julie Redfern are undertaking a cross-country cycling trip to raise money for the Sanfilippo Children's Foundation.

They're riding to help find a cure for Sanfilippo Syndrome — a deficiency that robbed Roth's niece Kerrin and nephew Matthew Bankert of their lives — and to inform people they meet along the way of the genetic disorder.

"I've wanted to do this for many years, to remember my niece and nephew and in honor of them," Roth said of the ride.

Redfern said as the cyclists began reflecting on Matthew and Kerrin's lives they wanted to build awareness for Sanfilippo Syndrome, which is characterized by the absence of an

essential enzyme that breaks down a complex body sugar. Over time that sugar builds up in the brain and other organs, ultimately stopping development.

Children are born seemingly normal, but as time progresses, they lose the ability to speak by about age seven, become wheelchair-bound as early as age 10 and can be completely bedridden by 14.

Matthew, diagnosed in 1992, died in 2005 at the age of 14. Kerrin died in 2007 at the age of 13.

Matthew and Kerrin's parents, Cathy and Ralph Bankert of Port Colborne were thrilled and touched by the gesture.

"It felt emotional for me to think someone would keep their memory alive," the mom said. "We remember but some people forget."

The cross-Canada journey will take Roth and Redfern from Stratford to Halifax. They

will then board a plane and fly to Vancouver where they will continue their cycling adventure across Canada back to Stratford.

They hope to raise \$50,000 during their 6,400-km journey.

The pair met five years ago. Redfern was excited to join Roth's journey. The avid cyclists have trained for their trip.

"How do you train for three months of riding? You start slow," Roth quipped.

"We're going to have a fun and exciting adventure," Redfern added.

Their adventure began Tuesday, June 22, when they had a big send-off in Stratford with the Bankert family. Within the first two days they made their way to Port Colborne to visit the Bankerts and their niece Lianne.

"I was almost in shock. I couldn't imagine that anybody would undertake such



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Jim Roth and Julie Redfern are cycling 6,400 km across Canada with the hopes of raising \$50,000 for Sanfilippo Children's Research Foundation. Roth's sister Cathy Bankert had two children, Matthew and Kerrin, who both died of Sanfilippo — a mucopolysaccharide disease characterized by children missing an essential enzyme that breaks down a complex body sugar. The cyclists made a recent stop in Port Colborne. Pictured are Ralph Bankert, daughter Leanne, Cathy Bankert, Redfern and Roth.

a thing to take three months and bike across the country. I'm proud of them," said Ralph Bankert.

To achieve their goal, the

pair must cycle about 100 km a day.

For more information on Sanfilippo, the Bankert family and Roth and Redfern's

journey across Canada, visit <http://www.cycleforelisa.com>.

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AWARD



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

Brittany Roach accepts a plaque from State Farm's Mark Guilbeault at Dance Expressions. Guilbeault said the award goes to a Grade 8 student who has exceptional grades and exemplifies being a 'good neighbour'. The award also puts forward \$300 to help Roach continue on with her dancing.

SPLASHING AROUND

KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Ella Solar enjoys some fun in the sun at the splash pad at H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park last week with her grandmother Karen Voth. Thanks to warm weather, youngsters have been flocking to the pad to cool off.



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■ **CRIME:** Ministry of Natural Resources to investigate

Supplied photo

Three-year-old Mitsy is shown after she was shot in the head with a camouflage hunting-style arrow near her owner's home on Morgans Port Rd. in Wainfleet. An arrest has been made.

Charges laid after cat shot with arrow

MARYNNE FIRTH
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — Feline justice may be served.

A 20-year-old Port Colborne man was charged last Thursday after a cat was struck in the head with a hunting-style arrow in Wainfleet earlier this month.

On Tuesday, June 1, at about 9 p.m., a Morgans Port

Rd. resident made a grisly discovery, finding his cat Mitsy outside the home with an arrow through her head.

After being rushed to an emergency veterinary clinic by Welland and District Humane Society, the camouflage hunting-style arrow, which entered through the cat's cheek into its neck, was removed.

Despite being shot in the

head, the three-year-old tabby is recovering well.

A male who was fishing in the area with a compound bow is alleged to have fired the arrow that caused Mitsy's injury, Niagara Regional Police said in a news release.

NRP spokesperson Nilan Dave said the man's intentions for being at the location was to fish, but "unfortunately he fired his arrow at an animal."

Brent Rickman is charged with injuring an animal and cruelty to an animal — both Criminal Code offences.

Rickman is scheduled to appear in Welland court Aug. 20.

Dave said District 6 officers in Port Colborne performed "intelligent and dedicated police work" following all leads and information provided by the public to make an arrest.

Police are reminding the public to follow the rules and guidelines hunters are required to abide by.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has been contacted and will further investigate the incident, and look into further charges specific to the Conservation Act.

One of Mitsy's owners, who asked not to be identified, declined to comment, but said she's leaving the case in the hands of the proper authorities.

mfrith@wellandtribune.ca

What is the importance of healthy eating for denture wearers?

The relation between significant tooth loss and the ability to chew fruits, vegetables and meats, has a great impact on the nutritional value of one's diet. Toothless or partially edentulous individuals are at a higher risk of malnutrition. Edentulous individuals with poor nutrition intake may be at higher risk for a variety of diseases. For example those who consume little vitamin A are at a higher risk for various forms of cancer, heart disease and rheumatoid arthritis. Similarly the dietary deficiencies of vitamin E are associated with various cancers, heart and Parkinson's Disease and low vitamin C and thiamine levels lead to a reduced immune system function, cardiovascular disease, hypertension and nausea, constipation as well as appetite and weight loss. Another ill effect of a low nutrient diet is a loss of muscle mass and strength caused by inadequate intake of protein, which could further increase frailty. An increased intake of fat and cholesterol observed in toothless patients have been associated with obesity, diabetes mellitus, as well as arteriosclerosis.

What can I do to prevent any of this happening to me?

Considering the vast implications of a low nutrient diet, it is worth acknowledging that nutritional balance and good health can be significantly improved and restored with the use of a well made denture, and a vitamin supplement regime planned by your doctor. A well made denture, will allow you to introduce back into your diet all the nutritionally laden foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, proteins and nuts that were avoided when chewing with an ill-fitting, poorly designed denture. Individuals with implant supported dentures, greatly improve their food choices by including more hard to chew foods that are rich in nutrients, therefore greatly improving their health status.

To switch to a more balanced diet may be as easy as having well fitted dentures, that allow for improved chewing and grinding function. The ability to better chew fruits, vegetables, meats and nuts will increase your nutrient intake and may decrease your risk of various disease. For more information see your Denturist.

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■ MUNICIPAL ELECTION

David Wyatt fourth to join the race for Wainfleet alderman

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — David Wyatt hopes to put his political science degree to good use as he runs for alderman of the Township of Wainfleet.

Last week, Wyatt became the fourth person to register and vie for one of four alderman positions on council.

For the past year he's been seriously considering running for the position and sees a lot of room for improvement, he said.

"I think there's the opportunity to provide some type of leadership and forward thinking."

Wyatt, 51, has a degree in political science from McMaster University and a business degree from

Windsor University, and while in university was involved with provincial and federal leadership campaigns.

He is a division director for Investors Group for the St. Catharines area. He is married to wife Terry and they have two children.

It's the first time that he has run for office.

He said playing an active

role on the Wainfleet Fall Fair board and running a business has helped him develop strong project management skills — skills he believes will help him navigate through the world of politics.

Wyatt sees the implementation of a planning committee as a good start to looking ahead to the future with a clear direction.

As for the biggest project

the township could ever see, the controversial water and sewer pipeline, he believes there is no simple solution.

"People on the Lakeshore, council and the region all have their own agenda and nobody is listening to each other and I think there are much better options than the Big Pipe."

If elected, he said, he hopes to make himself

available to constituents and would be a hands-on representative.

"I'm always a hands-on person with whatever I do. I get involved and don't jump in and make rash decisions. I look at it from a knowledge-based perspective."

The other three registered candidates are Eugene Canby, Betty Konc and Ron Kramer.



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■ **POLITICS:** Jeffs sounds off about regional debt load

Mayoral candidate questions Henderson

InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — A recent debate over funding at regional council left Wainfleet mayor candidate April Jeffs wondering why Mayor Barb Henderson didn't speak up on the township's behalf.

Jeffs said the debate



April Jeffs

was over Niagara Region borrowing \$136 million to pay for unfunded capital projects. In the end,

council voted in favour of a debenture to pay for the projects.

"I thought the mayor would have asked if there was any of that money for Wainfleet," she said.

With the proposed Wainfleet water and sewer servicing project potentially costing upward of \$85 mil-

lion, Jeffs felt the mayor should have asked for some of that money.

"I was just curious as to why she didn't say anything," she said, adding other regional councillors were asking for money for the future police headquarters and for repairing the Burgoyne Bridge.

"Maybe she didn't have enough information?"

Henderson said the \$136 million will go to projects already on the region's books, not for new projects like Wainfleet's proposed water and sewer servicing project, and she knew that going into the meeting.

"These are projects that we

are trying to implement now," said the mayor.

"I didn't feel there was really any reason to comment on it," she added.



Barb Henderson

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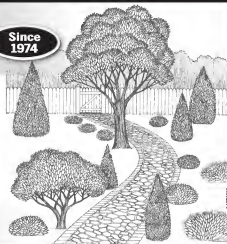
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■ **EDUCATION:** Declining enrolment puts strain on budget

Strain on school budgets

JULIE GRECO
QMI Agency

ST. CATHARINES — Declining enrolment and a lack of funding forced cuts to secondary school staff and the special education departments respectively, when District School Board of Niagara approved its budget for the 2010-11 school year recently.

The total budget was about \$379.8 million, and trustees were faced with difficult decisions — to balance the budget, they drew \$2.2 million from the general operating fund reserve, said Patricia Clark, finance committee chairman.

The board's financial results are considered strain from the continuing trend of declining enrolment, he said.

"As a result, the board was forced to look at both staffing and operating reductions in order to maintain the integrity of programming for students."

Having fewer secondary school students in the system translated into 18 full-time staff reductions in public high schools. There was a 2.3% decrease in enrolment.

At the secondary level, enrolment is expected to drop to about 14,409 next year from 14,514 in 2009-10.

"This is the first year where declining enrolment was the greatest factor," said superintendent Jim Morgan. The number of positions cut and employees that might be let go will not be clear until closer to the new school year, due to retirements and students moving

The board's financial resources are under considerable strain from the continuing trend of declining enrolment."

Dalton Clark, DSNB trustee

into and out of the system. Although enrolment for elementary was also projected to decline, Morgan noted the addition of 25 early learning years positions to the budget resulted in no requirements for staff cuts to that sector.

Last year, however, he said, the board cut 26 full-time elementary school positions which were all eventually called back by September.

Special education was one area that had a lack of funding resulted in staff cuts.

There was a reduction of about six professional-

als in psychiatric services, including special educational consultants and psych associates.

Morgan noted the reductions will be among centrally located staff and that it is not expected to reduce services.

He pointed out the board has added a psychologist to next year's budget, which it did not have in 2009-10.

"Any reduction in staff is considered a deep cut by the board," said Morgan.

"The board looks at any cuts in personnel as difficult to do."

Clark noted the reason for the special education cuts

was because the board is chronically underfunded in that area.

"Although trustees were able to use funds from our reserves to largely offset the costs of the funding shortfall, this isn't sustainable," he said.

"Unless a more permanent solution can be found, the board's reserves will soon be depleted and trustees will have to consider even more significant cuts."

Clark said while the board receives \$355.46 per special needs student, other boards across Ontario receive an average of \$508.69 per student.

"No one disputes the fact that we're the second-lowest funded special-ed board in the province. That just isn't right," said Clark.

"If we could get the min-

istry to ... give us our fair share, we should be able to do wonderful things."

Despite the deep cuts to the special education budget this year, said Clark, the board still expects a deficit of about \$1.4 million to be covered out of special reserves.

"That is money that could have been spent in a classroom," he said.

In a media release issued by the board, chairman Liz Palford said trustees worked hard to arrive at a fiscally responsible budget that ensures financial management and sustainability.

"This budget will also provide students in Niagara with the resources, programs and supports necessary for them to become successful in school," she said.

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No benefits, BPPSP, no vacation, no overtime. \$18.00/hr. 20.00/hr. 22.00/hr. 24.00/hr. 26.00/hr. 28.00/hr. 30.00/hr. 32.00/hr. 34.00/hr. 36.00/hr. 38.00/hr. 40.00/hr. 42.00/hr. 44.00/hr. 46.00/hr. 48.00/hr. 50.00/hr. 52.00/hr. 54.00/hr. 56.00/hr. 58.00/hr. 60.00/hr. 62.00/hr. 64.00/hr. 66.00/hr. 68.00/hr. 70.00/hr. 72.00/hr. 74.00/hr. 76.00/hr. 78.00/hr. 80.00/hr. 82.00/hr. 84.00/hr. 86.00/hr. 88.00/hr. 90.00/hr. 92.00/hr. 94.00/hr. 96.00/hr. 98.00/hr. 100.00/hr. 102.00/hr. 104.00/hr. 106.00/hr. 108.00/hr. 110.00/hr. 112.00/hr. 114.00/hr. 116.00/hr. 118.00/hr. 120.00/hr. 122.00/hr. 124.00/hr. 126.00/hr. 128.00/hr. 130.00/hr. 132.00/hr. 134.00/hr. 136.00/hr. 138.00/hr. 140.00/hr. 142.00/hr. 144.00/hr. 146.00/hr. 148.00/hr. 150.00/hr. 152.00/hr. 154.00/hr. 156.00/hr. 158.00/hr. 160.00/hr. 162.00/hr. 164.00/hr. 166.00/hr. 168.00/hr. 170.00/hr. 172.00/hr. 174.00/hr. 176.00/hr. 178.00/hr. 180.00/hr. 182.00/hr. 184.00/hr. 186.00/hr. 188.00/hr. 190.00/hr. 192.00/hr. 194.00/hr. 196.00/hr. 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2094.00/hr. 2096.00/hr. 2098.00/hr. 2100.00/hr. 2102.00/hr. 2104.00/hr. 2106.00/hr. 2108.00/hr. 2110.00/hr. 2112.00/hr. 2114.00/hr. 2116.00/hr. 2118.00/hr. 2120.00/hr. 2122.00/hr. 2124.00/hr. 2126.00/hr. 2128.00/hr. 2130.00/hr. 2132.00

PUPPO'S
Corner of Maple Ave. and Prince Charles Drive

SPECIALS in effect Fri. July 2nd to closing Thurs. July 8th, 2010 • OPEN SAT. 8-6, SUN. 10-5, MON.-TUES., WED. 9-6, THURS.-FRI. 9-9

FRESH AIR CHILLED BONELESS SKINLESS CHICKEN BREASTS

1/2 PRICE 3⁹⁹ lb.

CUT FROM ONTARIO AA AND AAA BEEF NORWICH PACKERS CORN FED BEEF

FRESH MULTIGRAIN BATAARD BREAD

SAVE \$1.99 \$1.99

PUPPO'S BAKERY FRESH BAKED APPLE PIE 2⁹⁹

DELICIOUSLY FRESH CORNED BEEF

2⁹⁹

Country House

WONDER STYLE CORNED BEEF

3⁹⁹

Wheatless

MOZZARELLA CHEESE

4⁹⁹

IDEAL FOR BAR-BQ SIRLOIN PATTIES

1/2 PRICE 99¢

CUT FROM ONTARIO AA AND AAA BEEF

IDEAL FOR BAR-BQ ITALIAN SAUSAGE

SAVE \$1.00 3⁹⁹ lb.

WONDER WHITE BREAD

675 g loaf

3/\$5

WONDER

3/\$10

PEPSI Regular or Diet

Case of 12

3 cases \$10

3 pkgs. \$10

GROUND BEEF

1⁹⁹ lb.

CLASSIC ELITE PREMIUM 2-PLY BATHROOM TISSUE

Pkg. of 12 Double Rolls

4⁹⁹

CHAPMAN'S PREMIUM ICE CREAM or YOGURT

2 litre tub

3⁹⁹

KRAFT CHEESE

500g block

5⁹⁹

REDPATH SUGAR

2 kg. bag

1⁹⁹

MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE

825 g can

5⁹⁹

CHRISTIE'S RITZ TRISCUITS

225g

2/\$4

SEALEST LEMONADE

2 Litre Carton

\$1

HONEY NUT CHERIOTS

680g box

4⁹⁹

NOW AVAILABLE LOCAL CAULIFLOWER 1.99 EACH

NO. 1 GRADE U.S.A. BLUEBERRIES

1⁹⁹

NO. 1 GRADE CALIFORNIA SWEET RIPE NECTARINES

89¢

NO. 1 GRADE ONTARIO ROMAINE HAVE A CAESAR TONITE

99¢

NO. 1 GRADE TEXAS SEEDLESS WATERMELON

2⁹⁹

NO. 1 GRADE MEXICAN RED SEEDLESS GRAPES

99¢

NO. 1 GRADE ONTARIO ZUCCHINI

89¢

NO. 1 GRADE ONTARIO ON-THE-VINE TOMATOES

1⁹⁹

REGIONAL COUNCIL

Inter-city transit plan given a green light by Region

MATTHEW VAN DONGEN
QMI Agency

Niagara councillors have ended decades of debate over whether to create a regional transit system by agreeing to pay city transit authorities the cost of the job.

A regional committee of the whole endorsed a proposal recently that would see eight new buses providing hourly service between the downtowns of St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Welland, with wheels hitting the road as early as next summer.

Councillors opted against an earlier staff and consultant proposal to create a Region-run transit service in favour of a three-year pilot project pitched by the three cities.

Under the proposal, the Region will buy buses for \$3.7 million and cover an expected \$1.9 million in yearly operating losses, but the three city transit committees will jointly control the fleet and run the inter-city routes.

"This decision will, I hope, move true regional transit closer to becoming a reality in Niagara," said Grimsby Regional Councillor Debbie Zimmerman, who suggested Niagara residents will eventually prove an expanded transit service is warranted.

"Use it or lose it, that should be the slogan we put on the buses."

The decision still has to be ratified at a future council meeting, but the vote appears to have ended persistent wheel-spinning among councillors over governance of inter-city transit.

The new plan won't affect existing inter-city routes that run to Brock University and Niagara College. It will improve feeder ser-

vices to Port Colborne and Fort Erie, but is less ambitious than the Region-run plan pitched by Enira Consultants and endorsed by regional staff earlier this year.

"Is this plan perfect? No, quite frankly, we continue to have some concerns that we hope to resolve with local transit authority staff," said regional transportation director Joe Cousins, who suggested council should still aim for a single transit agency in future.

"But we think overall this is a good first step towards council's transit vision."

Cousins said the new proposal addresses the most immediate transit need, which is an affordable and regular service between the downtowns of the three biggest cities for tourists and commuters.

It also means the Region can avoid the complicated legal dance necessary to get into the transit business, including convincing a majority of Niagara's 12 municipal councils to approve the idea.

"That approval is something that, at this point, I'm not convinced we would get," Cousins told councillors.

Some councillors worried about the Region was writing a blank cheque to the municipalities and wouldn't be able to control how its money was spent.

Zimmerman made a motion suggesting the creation of an oversight committee while Cousins said council would receive regular updates on how the pilot project was going.

Regional staff will return to council with a more detailed report in several weeks. If the plan is ratified next month, buses would be ordered in August and could arrive within 12 months.